HUMAN EVENTS

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RETREAT AT MOSCOW

By Felix Morley

Successful policy, in diplomacy as in any other field of human activity, depends both on the establishment and on the attainment of objectives. A foreign policy is created when a government formulates its objectives, in the field of international relations, in terms which carry meaning to its own and other peoples. A foreign policy succeeds when a government achieves, in practice, the objectives which it has previously laid down in principle.

The beginning of a New Year, and the almost coincident report on the conference of "Big Three" foreign ministers held at Moscow December 16 to 26, is a natural occasion to consider the measure of success now being attained by the foreign policy of the United States. That the Administration has a foreign policy, to the extent that its officials frequently state admirable objectives in understandable language, is obvious. The developing issue, for the election year of 1946, is the extent to which these advertised objectives are actually being attained.

Munich should remind us that the mere attainment of agreement with other governments is not of itself a token of success. If our Government sacrifices fundamental principles to secure accord, then foreign policy moves not toward, but away from, attainment of its objectives. Under such circumstances agreement is merely appeasement -- not achievement, but thinly camouflaged failure.

When such a failure in foreign policy is demonstrated, the resulting situation cannot be met by defensive explanations from high places. Before long, either official accomplishments will have to be stepped up or official pretensions will have to be toned down, as when President Roosevelt a year ago publicly discounted the importance of the Atlantic Charter.

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II

On October 5, 1945, at the conclusion of the abortive London session of the Council of Foreign Ministers, Secretary Byrnes reported to the American people the reasons why "agreement was impossible and further meetings were useless". In the words of the Secretary of State at that time:

> "We are willing to make many concessions but the United States does not believe in agreement at any price."

"The matter that caused the suspension of our work", Mr. Byrnes declared in this speech, "is no trivial or technical question". He explained that, in pursuance of the Potsdam Agreement, the September conference of foreign ministers had met in London primarily to make preparations for the peace treaties with Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland. But the unexpected attitude of the Soviet Delegation:

> " . . . would have excluded China from the consideration of all treaties and France from the consideration of all but one, without any assurance of participation in a peace conference."

This "exclusion of two permanent members" of the United Nations Security Council, reasoned the Secretary of State (on October 5), "would not promote the harmonious relations essential to the success of the United Nations Organization". And then he defined the "issue that had to be met" as:

> " . . . whether the peace shall be made by three or even five nations to the exclusion of other nations vitally concerned in the maintenance and enforcement of the peace which is being prepared."

Three weeks later, in his Navy Day speech of October 27, in New York, President Truman indorsed the assertion of his Secretary of State that: "Peace must be based upon mutual understanding and mutual respect." And the President then took occasion to "restate", as one of the "fundamentals" of American foreign policy, that:

> "We shall refuse to recognize any government imposed upon any nation by the force of any foreign power. In some cases it may be impossible to prevent forceful imposition of such a government. But the United States will not recognize any such government."

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III

It took only a few weeks of steadfast Russian pressure to make all these brave

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statements look silly. Admittedly, the effort of the very active Communist Fifth Column in this country helped considerably in bringing the Administration to heel. As the New York Daily Worker exulted on its editorial page of December 28: "The consequence was that the Truman-Byrnes leadership . . . was compelled to give way"

The first unmistakable evidence of the Administration's surrender to Communist determination came before the close of the recent Moscow Conference when, on December 22, recognition was accorded the Russian-directed "Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia". President Truman's assurance of October 27 seems inconsistent with this recognition, as was emphasized, rather than concealed, by the curious statement made simultaneously by Acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson:

> " . . . the United States Government desires that it be understood that the establishment of diplomatic relations with the present regime in Yugoslavia should not be interpreted as implying approval of the policies of the regime, its methods of assuming control or its failure to implement the guarantees of personal freedom promised its people."

Acceptance of the Russian sphere of influence throughout Southeastern Europe was finally registered in the official report on the Moscow Conference made public December 28. This promises British and American recognition of the Russian-sponsored Rumanian Government as soon as it is broadened to include a couple of non-Communist representatives. In the case of Bulgaria, says the report, "the Soviet Government takes upon itself the mission of giving friendly advice to the Bulgarian Government with regard to the desirability of the inclusion . . . of an additional two representatives of other democratic groups". In other words, we recognize Russia's successful imposition of its form of government on Bulgaria.

Meanwhile, nothing is heard of the Ethridge report, generally supposed to have advised against immediate recognition of these Russian puppet states. Nor, for that matter, is anything more ever heard of Cordell Hull's assurances to the joint meeting of both Houses of Congress on November 18, 1943, when the then Secretary of State reported to the representatives of the American people that:

> " . . . there will no longer be need for spheres of influence, for alliances, for balance of power, or any other of the special arrangements through which, in the unhappy past, the nations strove to safeguard their security or to promote their interests."

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IV

From the viewpoint of consistency in foreign policy, the arrangement looking toward United Nations control in the field of atomic energy cannot be attacked. This plan seems to be the only universally desirable procedure. It is, in any case, at present only in the blueprint stage.

The same immunity holds for the broadening of the control of policy in regard to Japan, to make this a more international rather than a wholly American affair.

Both of these steps, as also the arrangements for the none-too-liberated Koreans, are in the direction of substituting collective for unilateral Great Power action. These measures may be criticized, as General MacArthur has very properly pointed out in the Japanese case, but not on the ground that they are out of line with recent official pronouncements on our foreign policy.

Consistency, however, cannot be found in the decision to exclude China from the drafting of peace terms for any of the European satellites of the Axis; in the decision to exclude the United States from the drafting of the peace treaty with Finland; in the decision to exclude France from the drafting of all of these treaties except the one with Italy. These omissions are not offset by the fact that the excluded Great Powers, and others, will be authorized later to make suggestions as to the final treaties, acceptance of these suggestions being at Russian discretion.

As Secretary Byrnes said on October 5, the matter "is no trivial or technical question". It is the issue of whether Communism shall have predominant influence in dictating a peace to the maintenance of which all members of the United Nations are obligated in advance to give active military support.

In surrendering on this point, as in failing to obtain the slightest satisfaction from Russia in regard to the current aggression against Iran, Secretary Byrnes has clearly failed to maintain the principles of our foreign policy as heretofore announced. The agreement is rightly characterized as appeasement, on the lines of Munich.

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NOT MERELY GOSSIP

A Supplement to HUMAN EVENTS Vol. III - No. 1

The "Munich-in-Moscow" (see this week's Analysis) was a greater defeat for American diplomacy than is popularly supposed. Secretary of State Byrnes, in off-the record conversations before he left for Moscow, said that the principal American aim in the meeting would be to persuade Molotov to attend the opening UNO Conference in London this month. The Secretary feared that the new world organization would suffer severely in prestige if Russia did not deem the Conference sufficiently important to justify the presence of its Foreign Minister. On his return from Moscow last week, Byrnes had to confess that Molotov said he would be unable to attend.

The explanation for the defeat in foreign policy may lie in the field of domesti politics. A prominent Democratic politician offers this key to the mystery: "Byrnes is running, or thinks he is running, for President in 1948. The New Dealers have sug gested to him that he is Presidential timber because Truman may not run for re-electi But Byrnes was turned down as Vice-Presidential nominee in 1944. Who stopped him th It was the Left Wing of the Democratic Party -- the CIO, PAC, Hillman, etc.; and that crowd will stop him again, unless he appeases them.

"Byrnes' surprising concessions at Moscow, therefore, are not so much appeasement of Russia as appeasement of Russia's Fifth Column in this country, which is also the Left Wing of the Democratic Party. By this means, Byrnes hopes to win the Left Wing to his candidacy for the nomination in 1948. As a Southern Democrat, of course, he assumes he will get the Right Wing of the Party behind him. Whether it will work out as simply as that, whether the New Dealers will ditch him, after they get what they want in foreign policy -- I don't know. But I'm convinced that the New Dealers have sold Byrnes on this political strategy. Hence, the Moscow agreement."

But that as it may, Byrnes' trip to Moscow is vulnerable to political criticism. Last October, he took John Foster Dulles, Republican foreign affairs expert, to London with him, and said, "Our accord serves to show that in foreign affairs, Republicans and Democrats can work together, and that in vital matters of foreign policy we Americans are united." But Byrnes did not ask Dulles or any other Republican to accompany him to Moscow. The Republicans, therefore, can legitimately attack the Moscow agreement. Whether they will do so remains to be seen.

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Mr. Laird Bell, Chicago attorney, recently returned from Berlin where he had served as Chief Counsel to the Economic Division of the Allied Control Council, says: "Our policy in Germany is wrong. It is designed to punish Germany. It is designed not to prevent her from again plunging the world into war, but, I believe, rather to invite such a war. . . . . The Treasury had too much influence in the result. Too much of the Morgenthau plan was written into it. The policy is one of retribution. . . . Let the Germans clean their own house. Let them do their own de-nazifying -- they know who are the fanatic Nazis. Let them blame the Nazis, rather than look upon them as martyrs. Let all the Germans except the criminal few have hope of some thing to live for -- other than revenge."

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General MacArthur's achievements in governing Japan stand out in happy contrast to the bad handling of the German situation. The startling and historic Imperial Rescript, in which Emperor Hirohito declared his "divinity" a "false conception", is attributed to MacArthur's diplomacy. This step puts the Emperor much closer to the common people, undermines a reactionary superstitution and paves the way for a demo-cratic constitutional monarchy.

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The Anglo-French agreement on Syria and Lebanon, widely hailed as a victory for self-determination, is really something quite different. The British and French hav merely agreed to concentrate their troops in one place in this area, instead of with

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drawing them immediately, and to wait until the UNO lays down a policy for the Near East. In the formation of such a policy, the British and French will work together for maintenance of their "special positions" in this area, including military bases. American diplomats are opposing this scheme. American policy unequivocally supports self-determination and independence for Syria, Lebanon and other Arab states.

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A prominent labor figure has given us this comment on the General Motors strike: "General Motors and the Auto Workers Union are engaging in a sham fight, setting up and knocking down straw men. The Union talks about GM's ability to pay more wages. GM cries, 'socialism'. That's all beside the point. The point is: Who has the strongest collective bargaining position? If the Union were in a strong position, it wouldn't be bothering about the Company's ability to pay higher wages. But, so far the Union hasn't been in a position to enforce its demands. The Company really welcomed the strike because it wouldn't have to pay so much in Excess Profits taxes for 1945. The big question now is: Will the Company remain in this strong position after the New Year? Will they want very much to get the men back to work so they can make and sell cars? If so, the Union will be in a good position to get a nice deal. If not — if the Company isn't very anxious to start because the carry-over provisions of the Income Tax will make them indifferent to an early resumption of work — then the Union will remain in a weak position. Sooner or later, both sides will have to get together. The force of collective bargaining — and not straw men and words — will bring about a settlement."

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American diplomacy has apparently met with more success in its efforts to promote the American viewpoint in Spain than it has in Soviet Russia. According to the Baltimore Sun, the American propaganda bulletin has a Spanish circulation of about 90,000, which amounts to about one in every 291 Spaniards; and Franco has not tried to restrict its circulation. On the other hand, in Russia a similar American publication goes to but 10,000, or about one in every 19,000 inhabitants of the Soviet Union.

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The secret of why $80,000,000 worth of German-owned art has been brought to this country and stored in the National Gallery in Washington is now leaking out. The President's "Commission to Preserve the Art of Europe" has achieved a very clever victory. Mr. Edwin S. Pauley's Reparations Commission wanted to put the whole collection of German art in the Reparations pool, to be parceled out to the Allied nations. The President's Commission, however, forestalled this by bringing the paintings to America and by providing, in a carefully worded document, that the art should be returned later to German museums.

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Some of the most remarkable documents disclosed by the Pearl Harbor Committee have been those from Sumner Welles on the famous Atlantic Conference in August, 1941. In the words of John T. Flynn, writing in the New York Journal-American, Welles in one of these memoranda described "how Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill cooked up the so-called Atlantic Charter as a cover-up for the warlike commitments they made at sea in August, 1941". Welles shows that Roosevelt made two such promises, as follows: (1) to occupy the Azores, if necessary, with American troops; and (2) that on returning to Washington he would urge the Japanese to make certain agreements. If Japan should then refuse, Welles said, "the President desired the Japanese to know that in such event, in his belief, various steps would have to be taken by the United States, notwithstanding the President's realization that the taking of such measures might result in war". Then, the two leaders discussed what public statement should be made on the meeting. Churchill wanted a release in which the United States would acknowledge commitments to the British. Roosevelt objected, saying he was afraid the isolationists would attack him. Finally, to conceal the above commitments, the President consented to the publication of the famous Atlantic Charter, which he wrote off in December, 1944, as what the late Mr. Willkie would have called "campaign oratory".

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